franklin county board of health annual report 2008



ublic Health is a dynamic and ever-changing field to work in. It seems there is always a new or different challenge that comes to the forefront. We continue to place emphasis on preparedness for public health emergencies (such as an anthrax attack or a pandemic flu) but that doesn't lessen our traditional and most important public health work of protecting the environment, assuring safe food and water, promoting healthy behaviors, preventing the spread of disease, and providing immunizations...just to name a few.

Our efforts and commitment to provide quality service and protection to Franklin County residents only grows stronger. Without a doubt, we are more prepared, more knowledgeable and focused about what still needs to be done, and more motivated than ever to see that it gets done.

This 2008 annual report just scratches the surface of our work. The real story and success come from our staff who work so hard to provide these services to all of the residents of Franklin County. I encourage you to visit our web site to find out even more of what public health can and does do for you every day.

> Jusan A. Pilgner Susan Tilaner, MS, LD, RD, RS

Health Commissioner



Food Safety

The Food Safety Section took steps in 2008 to install a new software program that will give staff the ability to record the results of all inspections on hand held tablet personal computers. This will enable staff to better manage

inspection data and identify risks in our communities. Inspection reports will eventually be posted on our website for the public to easily view.

Community Environmental Health

In 2008, the Community Environmental Health Section was challenged by the increase in foreclosures in our community. Foreclosures cause public health nuisances if the property owners leave the home in an unsafe and unsanitary condition. Staff performed property searches and worked to find responsible parties. When responsible parties cannot be found staff request the Board of Health to declare the property a nuisance and hire the necessary labor and equipment to remove all unsafe and unsanitary conditions. The cost is then added as a lien on the property.

Staff also inspect:

- Manufactured Home Parks
- RV Parks, Campgrounds, Day Camps
- Public Swimming Pools and Spas
- Schools
- Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishments

In addition to handling:

- Animal Bite Investigations
- Rabies Control and Prevention
- Lead Paint Assessments
- Mosquito Control and Integrated Pest Management Programs

Plumbing Services

The Plumbing Inspection staff assure wastewater gets to the sewer, sewer gas is vented properly and drinkable water is available at the correct temperature at every tap whether it is

a home remodel job, a hot water tank installation, an apartment complex, a new single family home or a commercial business.

The Plumbing Inspection staff was busy with medical gas inspections due to the large hospital complexes built in Franklin County in 2008.

Solid Waste Enforcement and Nail-A-Dumper

Solid Waste programs prevent the improper disposal of solid, infectious and hazardous waste in the community. Staff is responsible for regulating the disposal of waste into approved facilities (including landfills, compost sites, construction and demolition debris landfills, transfer and recycling operations, and infectious waste generators).

The Nail-A-Dumper program which is funded by SWACO uses inspectors from the Franklin County Board of Health, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office and the City of Columbus Refuse Division to catch illegal dumpers and litterers. A Franklin County Assistant Prosecutor is also assigned to bring these criminals to justice. Visit www.nailadumper.com or call (614) 871-5322 to report illegal dumping.

Water Quality Protection

The Water Quality Section assures that private water wells are safe, and that household sewage systems are operating properly. This year we kept a watchful eye on any new development in the state's adoption of new sewage disposal rules. To date,

we operate under our local regulations, which we post on our website. Because of our updated local regulations, new technology kept staff knowledgeable of changes in waste water treatment and disposal methods.





Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force

Staff from our department formed the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force in 2008 to try to get a jump on the growing number of bed bug complaints in Central Ohio. Other members include The Ohio State University Extension, Columbus Code Department, Columbus Public

Health, landlords, schools, social service agencies, police and fire departments, and pest control companies. The task force produces educational materials for use by anyone affected by this pest. Visit www.centralohiobedbugs.org for additional information.

Despite what you may believe, bed bugs can potentially be a problem for anyone. There is an unnecessary stigma associated with bed bugs. The truth is that bed bugs prefer human blood, and they will feed on anyone, regardless of their cleanliness or where they live.

Housing Rehabilitation

Thanks to a Federal Community
Development Block Grant Program,
our department is able to provide
funds for handicap accessibility
modifications, urgent repairs, safe
housing modifications, private sewage
systems and private well repairs or

replacements to qualified homeowners. This program is through a cooperative effort with the Franklin County Board of Commissioners Department of Community and Economic Development and the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission.



Mercury Exchange

Franklin County residents can drop off mercury thermometers in exchange for a free digital thermometer at area fire departments. Mercury in even the smallest amount is hazardous. Take this opportunity to properly dispose of the mercury thermometers in your home. Visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/health for a list of drop-off locations.

Radon and Indoor Air Quality

Residents can pick up a free, short-term radon testing kit to test radon levels in their home from a variety of locations. The Ohio Department of Health provides the kits to us for distribution through a grant from the USEPA. Visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/health for a list of pick-up locations.

Hotel Sanitation

The Franklin County Board of Health and representatives from municipalities, fire departments and the State Fire Marshal worked together to develop a model Hotel Sanitation Ordinance. The ordinance sets minimal standards for cleanliness and sanitation for hotels and motels, and requires them to be inspected twice a year. To date, Hilliard, Grove City, Whitehall and Grandview Heights have adopted the ordinance.



he role of our public health nurses focus on the prevention of illness, injury or disability, the promotion of health, and the overall maintenance of the health of our community. Staff provide immunizations to protect children from catching and transmitting diseases such as measles, whooping cough or diphtheria. Staff also work with medically vulnerable children and their families to assure they are matched with proper medical or other types of assistance. This all happens in addition

to our continual work to track and prevent the spread of communicable disease.

We work collaboratively with a variety of other professions and community organizations to find the most effective way to promote and protect the health of our communities. Public health nurses link people with needed health resources to assure the best overall improvement in the health of the population.

We know that public health measures don't just save lives, they also save money. For instance, every dollar spent for childhood immunizations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis saves \$27 in direct medical costs. Every dollar spent for immunizations of the elderly against influenza and pneumonia saves \$2.21.



Immunizations...Are you up-to-date? Vaccinate!

The health department offers recommended and required vaccines for children and adults at clinic sites throughout the community. There is a small administration and assessment fee for childhood immunizations, but no child

will be denied required vaccinations if unable to pay. A fee is charged for adult immunizations. Call (614) 462-3635 for information about vaccines, clinic locations and times or visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/health.

Adult Immunization Coalition of Central Ohio

Our department continues to be a proud partner in the Adult Immunization Coalition of Central Ohio and worked collaboratively on seasonal flu immunization activities, including clinics, outreach and education in

2008. Planning for the 2009-2010 flu season has already begun. Visit www.vaccine4me.com for information on seasonal flu and other adult immunization recomendations.

Senior Wellness Clinics

During 2008, a public health nurse provided health assessments, screenings, and immunizations at 15 different locations each month. Flu and pneumonia immunizations were available October through December.

Communicable Disease

The Franklin County Board of Health works daily with physicians, hospitals, schools, day care centers and laboratories to prevent and control the spread of communicable disease through surveillance, investigation, education and outreach.

Public health has also taken on another new role for the 21st century. Current surveillance of healthcare data allows for early disease detection. This promotes rapid disease detection and communication among numerous partners. Planning, coordination and exercises among community partners allow us to test our readiness to respond.

Sometimes despite everybody's best efforts, an outbreak of disease occurs. Public Health does detective work to find the source of the contamination and works to prevent further spread of the disease. Staff apply the methods of epidemiology to learn what sick people have in common and locate the source.



How does Public Health work to stop disease outbreaks?

For over eight years, the Columbus and Franklin County Health Departments have joined forces to make the reporting, tracking and investigation of communicable disease cases easier and more convenient through our combined Communicable Disease Reporting System (CDRS).

The staff of the CDRS ensures proper investigation and follow-up of all disease reports. With this combined data, the health departments conduct surveillance of communicable disease; develop, implement and communicate prevention strategies; ensure affected residents have access to medical follow-up; communicate with the medical community; educate residents about communicable disease and support the domestic preparedness response plan.

The CDRS:

- Allows convenient and easy reporting of any communicable disease case in Columbus and Franklin County 24 hours a day
- Enables active reporting and analysis of disease trends
- Provides early identification of potential outbreaks and new trends in infectious disease
- Enables timely case follow-up and preventive interventions which will result in fewer secondary cases

It is the responsibility of the health care practitioners and laboratories to report cases of communicable disease to the local health department as stated by the Ohio Revised Code 3701.

Visit www.cdrsinfo.com for additional information.

"Because parents of children with special health care needs are so overwhelmed with the responsibilities of their child's care, the public health is an important resource. recently assisted parents whose child has cerebral palsy. They were working with several community agencies and were very confused about the roles of these agencies and how best to use the services. They had failed to submit the proper paperwork involved in some of the services because they did not understand the forms and did not know whom to ask. The home visit was the connection needed to teach the parents not only how to complete the various forms, but also the process of organizing their child's medical information as well as the medical bills. The home visit also led to assisting the parents in understanding their child's treatment plan which is an essential part of meeting the child's health care needs."



Cinda Rasor, RN, PHN

Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMH)

Staff in our BCMH Program work with families to ensure accessible, comprehensive and coordinated care for chronically ill and disabled children from birth to age 21. Staff provide

medical and related referral services for the treatment and rehabilitation of physically disabling conditions, chronic illnesses and potentially disabling conditions.

Through BCMH, our public health nurses help children from birth to the age of 21 with special health care needs to obtain comprehensive care and services. Collaboration with the local Help Me Grow program also links children 0-3 years to medical and social services.

Help Me Grow

The Help Me Grow Children with Special Health Care Needs Program assists families who have children ages 0 – 3 years that have a physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and require health and related services. The Program assists the family through information and referral to various community resources that are child and family specific.

Our public health nurses work with families in many ways. They explore the

family's medical insurance coverage and determine if they have a primary care physician. If the family is uninsured or underinsured, assistance is given to them regarding Medicaid. Encouragement is also given to parents to seek routine primary and preventative care. This will result in healthier children and those with special needs will receive high-quality, comprehensive, appropriate services.



Emergency Preparedness

Columbus is one of 72 cities in the country that is a "Cities Readiness" city. Our department receives grant funding to assure we can provide medication to our entire population in 48 hours should there be a biological attack. We continually work to prepare for the next pandemic flu or any other public health emergency that may occur such as largescale disease outbreak, an anthrax attack or the need for mass vaccinations against smallpox. Our department works collaboratively with our partners from Columbus Public Health on all preparedness planning. We will work with our emergency response partners to protect you and your family in the event of an emergency.

Only you can prepare you and your family so get "Ready in 3". Make a Plan. Make a Kit. Listen. For tips on how to prepare visit

www.franklincountyohio.gov/health.

You can also volunteer to be part of our local Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Volunteers are needed to contribute their skills and expertise during disasters and public health emergencies. Both medical and non-medical volunteers are needed. Visit www.volunteermrc.org.

Smoke-Free Ohio

The Franklin County Board of Health works daily to enforce the Smoke-Free Ohio Law. Smoking is prohibited in all public places. To report violations call 1-866-559-OHIO(6446).

In 2008, staff investigated 333 complaints of violations of the Smoke-Free Ohio Law in Franklin County.



The Board

The Board of Health is made up of five members who are each appointed to a five-year term by the Franklin County District Advisory Council. The District Advisory Council is made up of the Chairman of each group of Township Trustees, the Mayor of each Village and the President of the Board of County Commissioners.

The Board of Health meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at Memorial Hall (280 East Broad Street) in Columbus and all meetings are open to the public. To carry out day-to-day functions, the Board appoints a Health Commissioner who is the Executive Officer and Secretary of the Board. Susan A. Tilgner has served as Health Commissioner since April of 1999.

Our Budget

In 2008, the Franklin County Board of Health had an operating budget of \$7,124,992.00. Revenue for the year was \$8,264,399.11 including carryover funds from 2007. Expenditures were \$7,092,454.13. Being a service-based agency, the majority of expenditures were for personnel and

benefits. Other expenditures included materials and supplies, services and charges, and capital outlays. Revenue is collected through property taxes, local and federal grants, intergovernmental charges, charges for services, licenses and permits, and fines and forfeitures.

Board Members pictured from left to right: Robert S. Steele, Dana L. McDaniel, Annemarie Sommer, M.D., Jack R. Bope. Jr., Joseph P. Weaver

Franklin County



Board of Health

franklin county board of health
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